

## Shamar Rinpoche on his book Transparent Democracy

This is a description of why it is appropriate for Buddhist teachers to write books and involve in any social work which is deemed good for society.

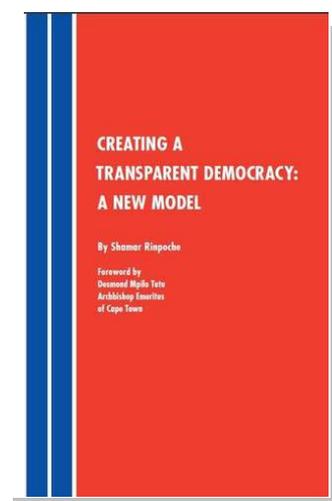
From the Time of Buddha until now, the curriculum of Buddhist study has been language (including all known spoken languages such as Sanskrit etc.), art (including painting, carving sculptures etc.), logic, natural sciences, social and political ethics, medicine, mathematics, world history, philosophy, mind science and meditation.

When one completes these subjects they were expected to write a book on any one of these topics. Then, other scholars would examine and critique the views espoused in their master thesis. Once one had passed the critique of other scholars, they would get the degree of a Mahapundit.

Accordingly, depending on how many subjects one had mastered, they would then receive particular umbrellas respectively. When one received an umbrella of peacock feathers, it indicated that they were a qualified pundit. When one received a gold painted umbrella, this meant they were considered a Mahapundit (a great Buddhist scholar).

All of these subjects were studied in order to write books or teach to the public for the good of the people. If a book was deemed a particularly evil book, then the government would put that book on the neck of a dog and the book would have been paraded throughout the city. If a book was considered to be not so accurate, they would just ban the publication.

The parading of the book on the neck of a dog has not been used for quite some time. However, the tradition of receiving criticism from other scholars has still been practiced up to the present day. According to the Buddhist view, writing a book is for the benefit of others. Therefore, they say your book must be logically accurate. If it is just your own thinking, and it is uncertain that it is beneficial for others, they say it is good to write in your own notebook but not fit for publishing, as it may mislead others. Otherwise, one can publish with the intent to have it scrutinized and validated by others for its accuracy.



Buddhist teachers can write books on politics, ethics etc., if it is deemed good for society. Buddhist teachers are not merely Tantric gurus who hold ritualistic bells in their hands and stand next to statues. Therefore, I wrote the book "Creating A Transparent Democracy: A New Model" for the good of society and only after I was certain myself that it was logically flawless and was needed for the world today, did I decide to publish it.

If it is deemed by scholars to either be inaccurate or it is considered to be evilly written, then you are most welcome to treat my book in either of the previous ways mentioned. That is to say, you may ban the publication completely or parade it on the neck of a dog throughout the city.

Best wishes,  
*Shamar Rinpoche*